

State of Alaska
Department of Commerce, Community, and
Economic Development
Division of Corporations, Business and
Professional Licensing



**BOARD OF
PROFESSIONAL
COUNSELORS**

***Consumer
Brochure***

**BOARD OF
PROFESSIONAL COUNSELORS
CONSUMER BROCHURE**

Alaska's Licensing Laws – Why?

The State of Alaska has licensing laws, which recognize that the occupation of Professional Counseling requires special knowledge, education, and training. Information on these requirements is available from the Alaska State Board of Professional Counselors Statutes and Regulations.

It is the intent of these laws to protect the public by setting basic standards of qualification, education, training, experience, and professional competence for persons who engage in the practice of these professional services. Only persons licensed under the Professional Counseling law may call themselves a Licensed Professional Counselor. The Professional Counselor profession has standards and ethics that must be followed.

What is a State Board?

The Board is comprised of volunteers who are appointed by the Governor. They are charged with establishing standards for licensing, identifying individuals who meet those standards, and administering licensing examinations.

How can a State Board help me?

The Board and the Division of Corporations, Business and Professional Licensing protect you by assuring that a licensed professional meets national standards regarding their qualification, knowledge, and experience before receiving licensure. The Division investigates complaints made by members of the public regarding possible abuses by professionals. The Board has the authority to discipline professionals for violations of the statutes and regulations. The Board requires professionals in this field to maintain their skills and update their knowledge through continuing education. The Board is committed to making sure that when you seek out the services of a Licensed Professional Counselor, you can be assured of receiving quality care and services.

How do I check a Professional's qualifications?

When selecting a professional, you may want to call the State Division of Corporations, Business and Professional Licensing at (907) 465-2551 or look online at:

<http://www.commerce.state.ak.us/occ>

The Division of Corporations, Business and Professional Licensing can tell you whether a Licensed Professional Counselor is licensed. Licensing is your assurance that the professional has met the education, experience, and examination requirements for professional practice established by Alaska law. The Division can tell you if the individual's license is current and whether that person has been disciplined for violating professional standards of conduct.

The Division address is:

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P.O. Box 110806

Juneau, Alaska 99811-0806

Also, you may access an individual's license status through the Division Homepage:

<http://www.commerce.state.ak.us/occ>

Click on "Professional License Search."

What are my rights as a client?

You have the right to professional and ethical treatment regardless of your age, sex, race, color, religion, sexual orientation, national origin, or disability. You have the right to a clear description of services, fees, and how you (and your insurer) will be billed. Client records and communications are confidential, and, subject to a few exceptions, may not be released by anyone without the client's consent.

What if I have a complaint?

If you believe that a Licensed Professional Counselor has performed improperly or incompetently, or that someone is working without the required license, please contact the Division of Corporations, Business and

Professional Licensing Investigative Staff in Anchorage at (907) 269-8437 or e-mail them at: investigations@commerce.state.ak.us.

What happens after I file a complaint?

An investigation will be made into the complaint by an investigating officer for the Board. If the investigating officer decides to investigate the complaint further, the person who complained or others with knowledge of the complaint may be asked for additional information.

If the investigation shows that a licensed professional violated laws, rules, or ethical standards that govern them, the individual may face:

- formal disciplinary action, including suspension or revocation of the license, and a financial penalty; and
- probation with limitation(s) added to the license to assure that the acts that led to the disciplinary action do not occur again.

the licensed professional may, with the Board's approval, voluntarily take corrective actions to assure that similar violations do not occur in the future.

If there is not enough evidence of a violation, then Division of Corporations, Business and Professional Licensing will close the case without licensing action. In every case, the Division will inform the person who has complained of the result of the investigation.

**You can obtain a Complaint Form from the:
INVESTIGATIVE SECTION
DIVISION OF CORPORATIONS, BUSINESS AND
PROFESSIONAL LICENSING
550 West 7th Avenue, Suite 1500
Anchorage, AK 99501-3567
Telephone: (907) 269-8437**

What is a Professional Counselor?

Licensed Professional Counselors possess specialized knowledge and training in assisting individuals to develop strategies for achieving more satisfactory resolution of personal or relationship problems.